

Message Text

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46

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-11 CU-04 SCI-06 NSF-04

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SNM-02

DEAE-00 AGR-20 SWF-02 NEA-10 NIC-01 FEA-02 INT-08

CEA-02 STR-08 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DRC-01 /185 W

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R 251330Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7749

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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SUBJECT: BULGARIAN QUARTERLY TRENDS REPORT (JANUARY -MARCH)

REF: SOFIA 1757

1. SUMMARY: DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD US-BULGARIAN RELATIONS WERE MORE OR LESS STATIC BUT WITH PLANNING FOR SECRETARY OF COMMERCE DENT'S VISIT AND A STOP IN SOFIA BY CODEL IPU PLUS THE ARRIVAL OF AN AMBASSADOR ALL SCHEDULED FOR THE FIRST PART OF APRIL, THE BROADENING OF RELATIONS IS ON THE UPSWING AGAIN. BULGARIA CONTINUES TO BE ACTIVE IN PROMOTING SOCIALIST UNITY AND IDEOLOGY. THE ECONOMY HAS MOVED FORWARD APACE. END SUMMARY:

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2. US-BULGARIAN RELATIONS: UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS QUARTER US-BULGARIAN OFFICIAL RELATIONS WERE IN THE DOLDRUMS FOR THE GREATER PART OF THIS QUARTER. BY AND LARGE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DULLNESS RESTED WITH OUR SIDE, WE DID NOT DEVELOP A SCHEDULE FOR DEPUTY PREMIER POPOV'S LONG OUTSTANDING VISIT AND THIS REMAINS A PROBLEM. THERE HAS BEEN NO FORWARD MOVEMENT ON A CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL AGREEMENT. AS AN INTERNAL US MATTER, THERE WAS A GOOD DEAL OF "TOING AND FROING" BEFORE A DECISION WAS MADE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PLOVDIV FAIR WHICH HAS BEEN THE LARGEST SINGLE ANNUAL US ACTIVITY IN BULGARIA. DURING THE LATTER PART OF MARCH BILATERAL RELATIONS TOOK AN UPSWING AS PREPARATIONS GOT UNDER WAY FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW AMBASSADOR, SECRETARY DENT'S VISIT AND THE STOPOVER IN SOFIA BY CODEL IPU. IN OTHER AREAS THERE WERE ACTIVITIES WHICH ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS. TWO BULGARIAN MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WENT TO THE US UNDER US GOVERNEMENT SPONSORSHIP AND AN AMERICAN PIANIST AND CONDUCTOR PERFORMED IN SOFIA AND ELSEWHERE UNDER BULGARIAN SPONSORSHIP; THERE WAS FURTHER COOPERATION IN THE CONTROL OF NARCOTICS; THE FIRST BULGARIAN TOURIST GROUP (130) MADE PLANS TO VISIT THE US; AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WERE ACTIVE. KAISER AND THE GOB SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH WOULD DEEPLY INVOLVE KAISER IN BULGARIA'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM, TWO TEAMS OF KAISER EXPERTS HAVE ARRIVED IN THE COUNTRY. FMC IS MOVING ALONG NICELY WITH ITS AGRICULTURAL PROJECT. AN AMERICAN TOBACCO FIRM PURCHASED 8 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF BULGARIAN TOBACCO.

THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE CONTINUED TO SHOW IMPROVEMENT WITH MORE THAN EXPECTED CREDIT BEING GIVEN BY THE MEDIA TO US EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT THE MEDIA CONTINUES TO COMMENT ON WESTERN INCLUDING US GENERAL DECADENCE.

3. INTERNATIONAL FRONT: THE BULGARIAN LEADERSHIP CONTINUED ACTIVE WITH PARTY FIRST SECRETARY ZHIVKOV VISITING EAST GERMANY IN JANUARY AND OTHER HIGH LEVEL VISITS TO SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. THE BULGARIANS CONTINUE TO SUPPLEMENT OFFICIAL USE

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PORT AND COMPLIMENT RUSSIAN OBJECTIVES WITH MORE STRESS DURING THIS PERIOD ON SOCIALIST UNITY; THE NEED FOR A BROAD COMMUNIST CONFERENCE; AND THE DANGERS OF DETENTE AS IT TENDS TO WEAKEN THE IDEOLOGICAL FIBER AND THEREFORE THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT - "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE DOES NOT EXIST FOR THE IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE". NONETHELESS, THE CONCEPT OF DETENTE CONTINUES TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE LEADER-

SHIP WHICH ALSO SEEKS WAYS TO REAPING DETENTE BENEFITS SUCH AS WELCOMING AND FETING THE FRG FOREIGN MINISTER THE END OF THIS MONTH. WE CAN EXPECT THE SAME TREATMENT FOR THE DENT AND CODEL IPU VISITS AND FOR THE SAME REASON.

4. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS: PARTY ACTIVITIES HAVE DOMINATED THE DOMESTIC SCENE. IN FEBRUARY THERE WAS A BCP PLENUM ON IDEOLOGY WHICH CALLED FOR INTENSIFIED IDEOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES AND VIGILANCE IN ALL SPHERES OF BULGARIAN LIFE BUT IN DOING SO REVEAL THAT THERE ARE WEAK LINKS IN THE ARMY AND NAVY, SCIENTISTS, INTELLECTUALS, TECHNICIANS, WORKERS, FARMERS AND MINORITIES; IN FACT ALMOST EVERYWHERE EXCEPT IN THE PARTY IDEOLOGICAL BUREAUS AND PERHAPS EVEN THERE FROM TIME TO TIME. A MARCH PLENUM SET THE AGENDA FOR THE MARCH PARTY CONFERENCE (MARCH 20-22). INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY WAS THE CONFERENCE'S MAIN TOPIC OF DISCUSSION, BUT ZHIVKOV TOOK THE OCCASION TO REITERATE HIS SEPTEMBER THEME OF INCREASED INTEGRATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BECOME "ONE ORGANISM" AS BULGARIA AND THE USSE COORDINATE ACTIVITIES IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND MILITARY FIELDS. APPARENTLY THE ONLY SOVEREIGNTY ZHIVKOV ENSISAGES FOR BULGARIA IS OF A CONSTITUTIONAL NATURE.

ECONOMICALLY, THE ENERGY CRISIS HAS NOT PROVEN SEVERE BUT IT HAS CERTAINLY REDUCED PRODUCTION AS FACTORIES ETC CLOSED DOWN ONE DAY A WEEK TO CONSERVE ENERGY. FOREIGN TRADE ACTIVITIES WITH BOTH SOCIALIST AND NON-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE CONTINUED AT A GOOD PACE. THERE WERE SHORTAGES OF VARIOUS FOOD AND VEGETABLES DURING THE WINTER MONTHS BUT THESE SHORTAGES WERE NOT ACUTE.
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